PAUL's SPEECH TO THE BISHOP of CRETIA:

OR, THE

Ancient Christians PRINCIPLE,

Or RULE of Good LIVING.

Reviv'd and brought to LIGHT,

Through the Continued

APPEARANCE and OPERATION

Of INWARD and SPIRITUAL GRACE.

Set forth by ANSWERS

To *Nine* weighty QUESTIONS,

With all Brevity and Plainness: Worthy to be taken Notice of by the whole CREATION of *Mankind*; and is of special Use to as many as are AWAKEN'D unto RIGHTEOUSNESS, and desire to know the WAY of GOD's SALVATION.

By *HUGH TURFORD*.

BRISTOL:

Printed by SAM. FARLEY, 1746-7.

TO THE READER.

BRITISH MUSEUM

MOST Men have learned to ſpeak well of Grace, *but few of them can tell us what it is, or where it may be found. Many will acknowledge it to be the Gift of* GOD; *yet think to have it from the Lips of Men. Many are perſwaded, that all Wickedneſs is for want of* Grace; *yet through their Ignorance, ſlight the Appearance thereof in themſelves. Many are convinced that there is a Sufficiency therein (were it before Mens Faces) to preſerve them from great Sins; but cannot believe there is a Sufficiency therein to ſave from any Sin: Which plainly ſhews, that their ſpeaking well of* Grace *is from Hear-ſay, and not from Experience.*

This little TREATISE *ſheweth, What* Grace *is; Where it may be found; and How it comes to be before Mens Faces; that it is the Only Saviour from Sin; and ſo the true Salvation: For whoſoever is ſaved from Sin here, ſhall certainly be ſaved from Death and Condemnation hereafter. And that many may come to be Witneſſes of this Salvation, is the Deſire of*

HUGH TURFORD.

PAUL's SPEECH TO THE BISHOP of CRETIA.

PAUL, an Apoſtle of JESUS CHRIST, writing to *Titus*, the firſt Biſhop of *Cretia*, had this Saying: *The Grace of* GOD *that bringeth Salvation hath appeared unto* ALL MEN, *teaching* US, *that denying Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts,* WE *ſhould live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godly in this preſent World.*

From which weighty Sayings theſe following *Queſtions* ariſe.

Q. 1. *What is the Grace of* GOD?

A. The Grace of GOD that bringeth Salvation, is no leſs than a Divine Inſpiration; the Gift of GOD to the Sons and Daughters of Men; an Adverſary to the Devil, a Deſtroyer of Sin, and the only Saviour of Mankind therefrom.

The Gift of Grace under the Goſpel Adminiſtration, is the fulfilling of that promiſed Covenant, which GOD, by the Mouth of his Prophet *Jeremiah*, promiſed to make with the Houſe of *Jacob*; which was, *That he would write his Laws in their Hearts, and put his Spirit in their Inward Parts*; that his People might have a Rule of Righteouſneſs in themſelves to guide their Steps by. —— As the Princes of the Earth rule and govern their People by an Outward Law; ſo the LORD reſolved to rule and govern his People by an Inward Law. They ſhould have no need to turn over the Leaves of a Book, as the Seed of *Abraham* under the firſt Covenant had, to know how they ſhould walk in right Paths; but they ſhould know, by looking into their own Hearts, what was right and what was wrong; what they might do, and what they ſhould leave undone; what

was juſt and what was unjuſt; what was pleaſing to GOD and what was not: For this Law is a Light, that enlightens Mens Souls, as the Sun in the Firmament enlightens our Houſes; ſhewing what is clean, and what is unclean; what may remain and what is to be ſwept out: And walking in this Light, we come to do what the Seed of *Abraham*, under the firſt Covenant, could not do; namely, deny Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſt, and live a ſober, righteous, Godly Life in this preſent World.——For as GOD made Man after his own Likeneſs, humble, lowly, meek, merciful, pure, peaceable, juſt and faithful, ſo he would have all Men to be: But foraſmuch as nothing leſs than the good Spirit of GOD in the inward Parts of Man, can reduce any of us to ſuch a Qualification, GOD hath given to every Man a Meaſure thereof, to enlighten their Underſtandings, and to guide them in the Path of Life and Salvation; and this Meaſure being the Free Gift of GOD, is by the Apoſtle in the Text, and many other Places of Scripture, call'd *Grace*.

Q. 2. *Where doth the Grace of* GOD *that bringeth Salvation appear?*

A. The great GOD, in his infinite Wiſdom and everlaſting Love, hath plac'd this Royal Seed and Plant of Renown in the Hearts of the Sons and Daughters of Men; for that is the chief Garriſon of the Soul; there the Grace of GOD that bringeth Salvation, may be found; from thence (until it come to be vail'd by Clouds of Iniquity) it ſhews itſelf a Witneſs againſt all Unrighteouſneſs and Ungodlineſs.

As every evil Motion and Temptation that leads to Sin, appears within, ſo the Grace of GOD that is given to Men to ſave from Sin, appears alſo within.

There is not a Man born into the World, if he hath liv'd to commit Sin, but have felt and known in himſelf Rebukes for Sin; and theſe Rebukes are the Appearances of Grace, and call'd in Scripture *Light*; and true Light it is, for that it manifeſts every Work of Darkneſs; it ſhews us both when and wherein we have done amiſs: And this it hath been in all Ages.——GOD hath not in any Age left himſelf without a Witneſs in the Hearts of Men, to declare his Righteouſneſs, Truth and Faithfulneſs: But there is as much Difference between the Appearance of Grace, and the Power of Grace to Salvation; between the Light of Righteouſneſs, and that Fulneſs which enables us to lead a Life of Righte-

ouſneſs-

ouſneſs, as is between a Seed that is ſown, and the Herb when'tis come to full Growth: But one leads to the other; and it is he that attains to the Fulneſs of Grace that comes to lead the ſober, righteous, Godly Life in this preſent World. —— It was ſaid of JESUS (the Second *Adam*) *That he was full of Grace*; and we may believe it from the Fruits he brought forth in his Life: He was humble, lowly, meek, patient, peaceable, juſt and faithful; he reſiſted the Devil in all his Temptations; led a blameleſs Life; fulfill'd all Righteouſneſs; and in the whole Courſe of his Life retain'd what the Firſt *Adam* ſoon loſt; namely, the *Image of* GOD: And whoſoever grows in Grace until he attains to his Stature, of being filled therewith, may be called as *Job* was, *A perfect Man.* —— And as the Appearance of Grace is inward, ſo is all its Diſcoveries, Revelations and Teachings. Whoſoever applies himſelf to Man for a right Knowledge of the Things of GOD, goes to a wrong School; *For* (as *Paul* truly ſaid) *that which may be known of* GOD *is manifeſt within.*——— The Proud, the Covetous, the Envious, and other Ungodly Perſons, may for a Time, and a *long* Time, have the Appearances of Grace; they may have Rebukes for Sin, but if by ſuch Rebukes they do not learn Righteouſneſs, they grow not in Grace, neither doth Grace grow in them; all ſuch hide their Talent, and in Time, for want of Improvement, come to have it quite taken from them, and being left graceleſs, lead a wicked and Ungodly Life in this preſent World.

Q. 3. *If the Grace of* GOD *appears unto* ALL, *and if there be a Sufficiency therein to make Men Godly; How comes it to paſs that there are ſo many Ungodly?*

A. As the Grace of GOD, that bringeth Salvation, appears unto all Men, ſo Motions of Sin that leads to Deſtruction, appears unto all Men, and commonly make the firſt Appearance. All Men have evil Motions and Temptations in themſelves to Sin, before they are acquainted with any Rebukes in themſelves for Sin; and the Work of the Devil is to make forbidden Things appear deſirable, the World and the Vanities thereof to be full of Pleaſantneſs; and as our Affections come to be taken therewith, as we make the World our Delight, and purſue after it, we depart from GOD; and tho' Grace may make many Appearances, tho' the good Spirit of GOD may long ſtrive with us, tho' we have in our ſelves many Checks and Reproofs, and there-

by made ſenſible that our Ways and our Doings diſpleaſe God; yet are we prone to perſevere therein; and thro' a continued Perſeverance, Sin grows, and comes to have Dominion over us: And the Devil making one Ungodly Perſon a Bait to catch another, is the very Cauſe why we have ſo many Ungodly Livers in the World.

The further any Man goeth from God and Godlineſs, the leſs Deſire he hath to return; and the more Delight we take in the Vanities of this World, the leſs Felicity we behold in the Things of God: And as long as one Spark of Grace remains, the Devil will follow all ſuch with his Temptations, for that he can call none really his own, until they become quite Graceleſs; and many ſuch Graceleſs Ones would be apparently found, were not Wickedneſs limited by an outward Law.——Where we, as *Iſrael* once was, without a King, or as the Inhabitants of *Laciſh*, who had no Magiſtrate in the Land to put them to Shame for any thing; we ſhould find many who bear the Chriſtian Name to be of the Devil's Nature, working all manner of Wickedneſs. So it highly concerns all that have the Appearances of Grace, from the Rebukes thereof, to learn Righteouſneſs, that it may grow in them and be their Guide: For nothing but Grace, and Obedience unto Righteouſneſs, makes any of us differ from the *worſt* of Men in vile Actions; for as all Righteouſneſs proceeds from a Fulneſs of Grace, ſo the Aboundings of Wickedneſs is thro' a Deprivation of Grace.

Q. 4. *What manner of Salvation doth the Grace of* God *bring?*

A. As the Appearances of Grace are Rebukes *for* Sin, ſo the Salvation that Grace brings is a Saving *from* Sin.

If Grace teacheth good Men to live ſoberly, righteouſly and Godly in this preſent World, Grace ſaves good Men from Sin in this preſent World.

We read of an Agel that appear'd to *Joſeph*, ſaying, *Fear not to take unto thee* Mary *thy Wife, for that which is Conceived in her is of the Holy Ghoſt, and ſhe ſhall bring forth a Son, and thou ſhalt call his Name* Jesus, *for he ſhall ſave his People from their Sins*,——Nothing defaceth the Image of God in Man but Sin, nor nothing recovers that Image again but our being ſaved from Sin.——The Mortification of Sin brings Men to their Beginning; the more humble, lowly, meek and merciful any Man is, the more he reſembles his Maker;

Maker; the more patient, peaceable, juſt, upright and faithful any Man be found, the more conformable he is to the Life and Nature of CHRIST.—— *Paul* told the *Epheſians* that *they were ſaved by Grace*; and what were they ſaved from, but from the Power of Sin and Satan? And where was this Grace but in their own Hearts? before they came (thro' turning from their Iniquities) to have Grace in their Hearts, they walked as Thouſands now do, according to the Courſe of the World, not denying, but fulfiling the Deſires of their Minds; and all ſuch are, as they then were, without CHRIST, without Light, without Life, without the Senſe or Feeling of any thing in them that was of GOD. Aliens from the Government of CHRIST's eternal Spirit in their inward Parts, and Strangers from the promiſed Covenant; knowing no more of a Law in their Hearts to guide their Steps by than the Ungodly Men of this Age do.

But when they came to be quicken'd by CHRIST, and to have in their own Hearts his good Spirit, and to be led thereby, they were ſaved from Sin; they came to have New Natures, and ſo to be New Creatures; and then they were no longer Strangers to CHRIST's Government by a Law in themſelves, but Subjects to Righteouſneſs, Citizens with Saints, and of GOD's Family: To which bleſſed State we might all come, did we but embrace the Gift of GOD for our Salvation, and give our ſelves up to be taught and guided thereby; which would be our Wiſdom, ſince nothing elſe can ſubdue *Satan*, ſave from Sin, and enable us to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and Godly in this preſent World.

Saving from Sin on this Side the Grave, may, to ſuch as are Strangers to GOD's Salvation, ſeem an incredible Thing; but were they ſo well acquainted with the Power of Grace, as too many are with the Strength of Sin, they would ſay, CHRIST's *Yoke is eaſy*. —— Hath it not been the Saying of many Ungodly Men, *They would amend their Lives if they had but Power?* Where any Heart, thro' a Perſeverance in Sin, comes to be filled with Uprightneſs, Sin and *Satan* hath ſuch Power over the Faculties of their Souls, that they cannot reſiſt evil Motions and Temptations, but muſt yield thereunto, and ſuffer themſelves to be led away thereby, tho' they know it is to evil Practices. —— And if Sin hath ſuch Dominion over Ungodly Men, why may not Grace have as much Dominion over Godly Men? Surely good *Joſeph* found

ſuch

ſuch a Power in his Soul, when he ſaid, *How can I do this great Evil and ſin againſt* GOD? —Grace being a Divine Inſpiration, commands the Hearts of all good Men; and the Heart being the chief Garriſon of the Soul, commands every Member of the Body, holding them in with Bitt and Bridle.——The Ear of a gracious Man is ſhut from hearkening to Fables and evil Reports; his Eye is turned aſide from gazing upon Vanity; his Tongue is not ſuffer'd to Curſe, Swear, Lye, or to be employ'd in any idle Communication; the Hand is limited from taking of Bribes, to pervert Juſtice, and from taking by Violence, or otherwiſe, any thing that is not our own; the Feet is reſtrained from going with the Drunkard to Exceſs; or with a Lewd Woman to the Chamber of Wantonneſs; or with Rude Perſons to Riotting, Revelling, or any other Rude Exerciſe: And by this Dominion that Grace comes to have over us, the LORD ſaves his People from their Sins. And as we live in Subjection to this Power, we are Servants to another Prince; Sin and *Satan* hath loſt their Dominion over us: And this is GOD's Salvation; by this we come to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and Godly in this preſent World.

Q. 5. *Who did the Apoſtle mean when he ſaid,* Teaching us, *was it the World in General, or only ſome Particulars?*

A. CHRIST was given for a Light to the *Gentiles*, but he was not given for a Leader to the *Gentiles*, until they turned from their Ungodlineſs, and came to live under the Government of his eternal Spirit in their own Hearts; for ſuch only the LORD owns for his People; and none but ſuch can call him LORD in Truth; and until he is a Leader, he is not a Teacher.— Grace appears unto all Men; every one that is born into the World hath a Light in his Soul, that ſhews him the Motions of Sin, and rebukes him when and as oft as he yields thereunto: But the Teaching of Grace is not known till we come to turn from Sin: We ſhall know the Teachings of Grace when we come into the School of Grace.

As no Maſter puts a Child to read in the Bible before he hath learned his Horn-Book; ſo the Grace of GOD teacheth no Man Godlineſs, until he hath learned to deny Ungodlineſs. The World in general hath not Grace; their Talent, for want of Improvement, being taken from them; and ſuch as have not Grace, cannot be taught by Grace.

All Righteouſneſs is learned out of the Book of the Law, when it comes to be written in our Hearts; but that Law being the Law of the Spirit of Life we muſt be quickned by CHRIST, and have the Spirit of Life, before we can learn from that Law.——Our Anceſtors made it their Concern to teach Youth good Manners, as Temperance, Moderation, Chaſtity, civil Behaviour, to be dutiful to Parents, to ſhew Reſpect to their Elders, to be circumſpect in their Communication, ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak, to anſwer with Meekneſs and Gravity, to be true to their Truſt, faithful in their Dealings, keeping to their Word in all Things, that their Word might be taken in all Caſes without Doubt or Scruple; every one to know their Place and abide therein, and as many as were reduced to this excellent Qualification where called Gentlemen, and Gentlewoman, for they had learned to live a ſober Life.

Now as we turn from Ungodlineſs to Sobriety, we bring forth all theſe Fruits in our Lives; for Grace teacheth all this, and much more: But ſince we find ſo few thus qualified, we may certainly conclude, that though Grace appears unto all, all are not Taught thereby.

Q. 6. *We muſt Confeſs, that we have known Inward Rebukes for Sin; we have been Check'd, Reproved, and Convicted in our ſelves after we have done amiſs; but we have not found any thing in our ſelves, when ſtrong Motions, and Temptations hath ariſen in our Minds, to reſtrain us with Bitt and Bridle from doing amiſs; and to deny Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts in our own Strength, ſeems too hard for any Mortal; eſpecially, when any Lordly Sin hath got the Dominion over us: What can we do in ſuch a Caſe?*

A. Could Man in his own Strength deliver his Soul from under the Power of Sin and Satan, return unto GOD, and lead a ſober, righteous, Godly Life in this preſent World, there would have been no need of a Redeemer, no Occaſion for a SAVIOUR, no Uſe of a Quickening Spirit to give Life to our Souls, no Neceſſity of GOD's writing his Law in our Hearts, for a Rule to guide our Steps by, no want of a Light in our Souls to ſhew us where the Devil ſpreads his Net, caſts his Bait, lays his Gin, and diſplays his falſe Colours; but Man can no more deliver his Soul from the Power of Sin and Satan without *the Help of the* LORD, than *Iſrael* when they were in *Egypt*, could go Free from the Servitude

Servitude of *Pharaoh* without *the Help of the* LORD; which being known to the LORD, Grace appears unto all Men for their Aid. —— And though the Appearences of Grace may ſeem but ſmall Aid to ſet our Souls Free from the Servitude of Sin and Satan, and to conduct us in the Way of Life and Salvation, till we come to the End of our Race, to live under CHRIST's Government; it is not ſmaller than *Iſrael*'s Aid was, to bring them from under the Servitude of *Pharaoh*, and conduct them to the promiſed Land.

Iſrael's Aid was but two aged Men, the Younger of them being about eighty Years Old, having no Weapon but a Rod in one of their Hands, yet by this ſmall Means GOD *being with them*, they brought from under the Power and Servitude of *Pharaoh* Six Hundred Thouſand Men, beſides Women and Children, and Grace being a Divine Inſpiration, is Aid enough to bring Six Hundred Thouſand Millions from under the Servitude of Sin and Power of Satan, did Men but confide therein, and give themſelves up to be guided thereby.

Inward Rebukes, if we have Regard thereunto, begets a Fear in Men, as the ſhaking of the Rod doth in Children; and as the *Fear of the* LORD *is the Beginning of Wiſdom*, ſo it is the Beginning of a *Reformation of our Lives*.

If I am check'd in my ſelf for making a Lye, and have Regard to that which check'd me, I ſhall be afraid of making another; or if I find in my ſelf Rebukes for not keeping my Promiſe, or for doing any Thing amiſs, and have regard to ſuch Rebukes, I ſhall be afraid to do the like, leſt the next Rebukes be ſharper; and as this holy Fear abides in us, we come to deny Ungodlineſs, and in denying Ungodlineſs we learn Righteouſneſs: But ſuch as find in themſelves Rebukes for Sin, and have no Regard thereunto, are like unto Children that carry Horn-Books at their Sides, and learn nothing therein, they are no Schollars in the School of Grace.——We have read, that Reproofs of Inſtruction is the Way to Life, and many good Men may be found at this Day, who will acknowledge that they had never come to a Life of Righteouſneſs had they not had Reproofs of Inſtruction from their own Hearts, by which they came to to deny Unrighteouſneſs.

For where Rebukes for Sin are received in Love, the LORD doth not leave ſuch Souls, but follows them therewith; and the more Vices we ſubdue, the more in the Light

of

of the LORD ſhall we ſee, and the more Power ſhall we receive from GOD to overcome them.

If one Plague will not make *Pharaoh* willing to let *Iſrael* go, he ſhall have another, and another, until he be willing; and if one Rebuke will not make us willing to Part with a beloved Sin, we ſhall have another; yea, Trouble and Terror. —— *Paul* knew Terror before he came to find Peace with GOD, and Peace in his own Conſcience; he was acquainted with Judgment, before he came to obtain Victory; nothing hath Power to break the Bonds of Captivity, and ſet us Free from the Law of Sin and Death, but the Law of the Spirit of Life in our own Hearts.

Iſrael's main Enemies were not ſubdued as ſoon as they came out of *Egypt*, but when they came into the promiſed Land; neither is the Body of Sin made weak, as ſoon as we turn from Unrighteouſneſs, but when we come into the Life of Righteouſneſs, to have Grace before our Faces, as *Joſhua* was before their Faces, for Sin cannot ſtand in the Face of Righteouſneſs, no more than the *Canaanites* could ſtand in the Face of *Joſhua*.———And if any Lordly Sin hath got Dominion over us, I ſhall not ſay as one formerly ſaid, *Fight not with great nor ſmall, but with the King of Iſrael:* But rather, when violent Motions ariſe, ſtand ſtill, and the LORD will fight for us; for as our Hearts come to be poſſeſs'd with Grace, If the Enemy ſhould come in as a Flood, the Spirit of the LORD being in our Inward Parts, will lift up a Standard againſt him.

The LORD's Controverſy is not as Men vainly imagine againſt the Sinner, but againſt the Author of Sin; his Appearances are all in Love to ſave the Sinner, and by his Judgments to weaken the Strength of Sin: For Man once freed from Sin, is as willing to lead a righteous Life, as any Ungodly Man can be to lead a wicked Life, and more Joy he hath, tho' the World cannot ſee it.

Q. 7. *What may truly and properly be called a Sober, Righteous, Godly Life?*

A. A Sober Life many may in ſome Meaſure be acquainted with, but a Righteous Godly Life is rarely conſidered.

Devotion which conſiſts in hearing of Sermons, reading of good Books, performing of Family Duties, &c. hath for many Ages been accounted Godlineſs, and the Practitioners thereof, Righteous People.———Theſe Things are not to be

be diſcommended where they are done in Sincerity, but theſe are not the true Character of Righteouſneſs and Godlineſs.

This and much more might be found amongſt the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, yet JESUS told his Diſciples, That *except* their *Righteouſneſs* exceeded the *Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees*, they could *in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of* GOD. —— And who is there amongſt us, that are called *Chriſtians*, but *one* Day in *ſeven* will be in the Exerciſe of ſomething that is called Godlineſs, tho' they have not learned to deny Ungodlineſs; and ſuch as have not learned to deny Ungodlineſs, are far from ſuch a righteous, Godly Life as the *Grace of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST teacheth all its Followers.——The only way to know what is Righteous and Godly, is to conſider what is Unrighteous and Ungodly, for the one is oppoſite to the other as Light to Darkneſs: And theſe that follow the latter will acknowledge to be Unrighteous and Ungodly, *viz.* Drunkenneſs, Whoredom, Theft, Envy, Hatred, Bloodſhed, Swearing, Curſing, Lying, Extortion, Fraud, Double-dealing, Tale-bearing, and Whiſpering, which is the Seed of Strife; all theſe Things are Unrighteous, and Pride above many Evils, moſt Ungodly.

Theſe are not Fruits proceeding from the good Spirit of GOD, but from the evil Spirit of this World; not Iſſues of Life, but Streams that flow from a corrupt Spring; theſe comes not from the Teachings of Grace in our Hearts, but from evil Motions that ariſe in our Minds: Theſe makes Men Sinners before the LORD; and as long as we live in the Practice of any of them, we ſhall not be righteous in his Sight. Thoſe that brought forth Fruits of this Kind, have in all Ages of the World been teſtified againſt as unrighteous and Ungodly Livers. Theſe are Infirmaties of the Soul, that Millions of Money have been given to Phyſicians to cure; but behold, Health hath not been by them reſtored. Theſe are Weeds that Thouſands hath been hired to pluck up, but to this Day have not made clean Gardens, nor never will, by all the Art they have; for CHRIST is the *only Phyſician of Souls*; none can take away the Sins of the World but *him* alone. —— Whoſoever thinks to attain to a righteous Godly Life, but by the Teachings of Grace in his own Heart, deceiveth his own Soul. Men may Lop off, or hinder the Growth of many Branches of Iniquity that appears outwardly; but cannot take away the Cauſe which is within; and

unti

until the Cauſe be removed there can be no thorough Cure.

As Grace hath a Spring, ſo Iniquity hath a Root, and the Ax that ſmites at this Root is in CHRIST's Hands; and what is the Ax, but the Law of the Spirit of Life? a Law of Righteouſneſs in our inwards Parts; this wrought a perfect Cure in *Paul*, this made him a Free Man and a Good Man, a Scholar and a Preacher; and that which cured *Paul*, and ſet him Free from the Power of Sin, hath a Sufficiency in it to ſet all Men Free from the Power of Sin.

Walk in the Spirit, ſaid *Paul*, and ye ſhall not fulfil the Luſt of the Fleſh; that is the only Remedy, that is the Soul's healing Salve, and what is this walking in the Spirit, but following the Leadings of Grace in our own Hearts?

For Grace, as it comes to have the Rule over us, brings down all exalted Thoughts, abaſeth Pride, ſhuts out Covetouſneſs, gives no Place unto Wrath, reduceth us to a cool, quiet Frame of Spirit; in which Frame we can bear and ſuffer. Grace will not ſuffer us to do any unjuſt Thing, nor allow us to ſpeak an ill Word; much leſs to be Drunk, commit Whoredom, Steal, or any ſuch abominable Vices; for it is the promiſed Spirit of Truth that leads into all Truth, leads out of all Error, and ſo brings Salvation indeed.

No Man can lead a righteous Life, 'till a right Spirit comes to have the Poſſeſſion of his Heart; for from the good Treaſures of the Heart proceeds all good Living; for that is the Guide, and this Guide being of a Divine Nature, makes us to be heavenly-minded.——Nothing exceeds the Righteouſneſs of *Scribes* and *Phariſees* but the Righteouſneſs that proceeds from a right Spirit in our own Hearts; for that is not our own Righteouſneſs, but the Righteouſneſs of CHRIST.—— As Murder, Adultery and Theft, which are the worſt of Evils, proceeds out of the Heart, whilſt the evil Spirit of this World hath the Poſſeſſion thereof, ſo Good Will to all Men, which is the chiefeſt of Vertues, proceeds out of the Heart, when the good Spirit of GOD comes to make its Abode there; but this Abode is not known till by denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, the Spirit of this World is denied, aad thereby the Heart cleanſed; then, and not 'till then, can we come to know *The* LORD *our Righteouſneſs*.——He that is reduced to ſuch a Qualification, as to have Good Will to all Men, is of all Men moſt Godly; for as GOD in his unlimited Love to Mankind, *cauſeth his*

Sun to ſhine on the Evil and on the Good, and his Rain to rain on the Juſt and Unjuſt, ſo he that hath Good Will to all, will not wrong any, oppreſs any, ſhew Violence to any, nor ſpeak Evil of any; but be ready to ſerve all Men in Love and Faithfulneſs; and this is a true Character of a ſober, righteous, Godlike Man; ſuch are converted indeed, and become as a weaned Child, and are enter'd that Kingdom that conſiſts in Righteouſneſs, Peace and Joy in the *Holy Ghoſt*. —— And ſince this Reformation is only and alone by the Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; give me Leave to ſay with the Prophet, *Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to the Water and drink*. Every one that hath a Deſire in his Soul after Righteouſneſs, turn into the Grace of GOD in your Hearts. The Water that the *Prophet* invited all thirſty Souls unto, is no other than that which CHRIST giveth; which, whoever drinketh thereof thirſteth no more, but hath (as many can this Day witneſs) a Well in himſelf, not only iſſuing, but flowing up to eternal Life.

Preaching will coſt Money, Books will coſt Money; but the *Grace of* GOD is a Free Gift, *without Money and without Price*; nothing is required on Man's Part but to hearken thereunto, and take Counſel therefrom. *Hear*, ſaid the Prophet, *and your Soul ſhall live*. ——— *Adam* hearkening to evil Inſinuations died unto Righteouſneſs; and ſo do all Ungodly Men; but he that hearkens to the Voice of Grace, lives unto Righteouſneſs; and from the Flowings of that Spring that he hath in himſelf, leads a ſober, righteous, Godly Life in this preſent World. ——— Hearing and Reading at the beſt, is but to know what we ought to do, and properly belong to ſuch who know no *inward Teacher*; but true Godlineſs is a doing what Grace teacheth, and all ſuch Doings are right and good.

Q. 8. *Were not the Scriptures written for our Learning, and are not they a ſufficient Rule of Righteouſneſs?*

A. The Scriptures are a ſufficient Rule, a ſtrait and exact Rule; but who can walk by that Rule, unleſs he be inſpired with the good Spirit of God?

The Scriptures that relate to a righteous, Godly Life, conſiſts of two Parts, the one Part was written by *Moſes*, as a Rule of Righteouſneſs to the Seed of *Abraham*, the other Part proceeded from the Mouth of CHRIST, and the Pens of ſuch as were inſpired by him. ——— The Rules that the Seed of *Abraham*

Abraham had to walk by, we may read in the Book of *Moſes*; the Rules that Chriſtians are to obſerve, are contained in the 5th, 6th and 7th Chap. of *Matthew*, as they proceed from the Lips of him whom we call LORD, and whom we ought to obey in all Things, or otherwiſe we are not his Servants, much leſs Children of the moſt High.

Could the Houſe of *Jacob* have walked by their Rule, and kept the firſt Covenant, there would have been no need of a Second; had the Law that was written on Tables of Stone, been ſufficient to guide their Feet in Paths of Righteouſneſs, there would have been no need of writing Laws in their Hearts. —— Thoſe People had not only Ten Commands written on Tables of Stone, but many other Statutes and Judgments proceeding from a Righteous Judge, written in their Books, and not only read, but alſo expounded unto them every Sabbath-Day, that they might walk in righteous Paths; but tho' they had the Words of GOD in their Books, they had not the Fear of GOD in their Hearts, and ſo they thought they had a great Zeal for an outward Worſhip and Form of Devotion, yet were they Ungodly in Life and Converſation. —— And what ſhall I ſay of us who are called Chriſtians? We have the Words of God, and the Words of CHRIST, the Words of the Prophets, and the Words of the Apoſtles in our Books; we have large Rules of Righteouſneſs, but do we guide our Steps by our Rule? or can We?

The Chriſtian's Rule of Righteouſneſs, is CHRIST's Directions; let us who ſay the Scripture is our Rule, examine our Abilities to walk by our Rule: Are we Lights to the World? Do our good Works glorify GOD, or ſhame our Chriſtian Profeſſion? Are we ſo far from committing Adultery, that we have not ſo much as a luſtful Thought? Are we ſo far guided by Truth, that every Word that proceeds out of our Mouths by way of Promiſe, is ſure and ſtedfaſt? Can we refrain from ſmiting when we are ſmitten? *Can we give our Cloak to him that ſues us at the Law, and wrongfully takes away our Coat? Can we love our Enemies? Can we bleſs them that curſe us? Can we do good to them that hate us? Can we pray for them that deſpitefully uſe us? Can we depend on* GOD's *Providence without taking Care what we ſhall eat or what we ſhall drink? Can we do unto all Men in all Things whatſoever, as we would that they ſhould do unto us? This is* CHRIST's *Yoke; can we bow our Hearts and Minds*

thereunto? This is CHRIST's *Burthen, and can we bear it? He ſaid his Yoke was eaſy, and his Burthen light; but if theſe Things are too hard, and too heavy a Burthen to us,* it is becauſe we have not his Grace and his Spirit; we have a Chriſtian Name, but are not in the Chriſtian Nature; we have a Rule but have not Power to walk by our Rule; and then what good do our Rule do us?

If ever we think to walk by Scripture Rules, if ever we intend to keep our LORD's Command, and if we would lead a righteous Godly Life in this preſent World, we muſt turn into the Grace of GOD in our own Hearts, for that gives us Power to keep to our Rule.—— It was for want of Grace that the Seed of *Abraham* could not keep *Moſes*'s Commands; is is for want of Grace that Chriſtians do not keep CHRIST's Commands; he lays no other Burthen on us than what he bore himſelf; the Fulneſs of Grace that dwelt in him, made all theſe Things eaſy to him; and as we grow in Grace, till we come to be filled therewith, they will be eaſy unto us; Grace mortifies Sin, and where Sin is mortified, nothing is eaſier than to lead a righteous Life.

Objection. *But ſome may ſay, our Dependance for Life and Salvation is not on Works of Righteouſneſs, but on Faith; we believe and therefore hope to be ſaved.*

A. I know that is moſt Mens Dependance, and Faith enough we all think we have; but is it a Faith that purifies the Heart, and makes our Bodies fit Temples for the Holy Ghoſt?——— *Paul* put the *Corinthians* on an Examination of themſelves, on a Tryal and Proof of their Faith; and it would not be amiſs if all that account themſelves Believers, did prove their Faith by the ſame Touch-ſtone; *Know ye not,* ſaid Paul, *that Chriſt is in you, except you be Reprobates.*

Was CHRIST in the *Corinthians?* and is he not in all Men that turns from Uugodlineſs and comes to have their Hearts purified?——— How can we know the only true GOD, if we do not behold his Preſence? How can we know our SAVIOUR if he be not in us, to ſave us from our ſpiritual Enemies, as *Joſhua* was in the Camp of *Iſrael,* to ſave them from their outward Enemies? And this is Life eternal, not to hear of a GOD and a SAVIOUR, but to know Him, to feel the Power of GOD, and to be Witneſſes of CHRIST's Salvation: Theſe are Believers, and true Believers; for their Eyes have ſeen what they believe.

Faith

Faith and Works of Righteouſneſs go together; he that hath the one hath both; and Grace is the Spring from whence both proceed; the Reprobate, the Ungodly, the Graceleſs, have neither.

Q. 9. *If Inward and Spiritual Grace be ſufficient to teach us our Duty towards* GOD *and Man, and to eſtabliſh us in Righteouſneſs, wherefore was there an Outward Miniſtry? And to what End were Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts, Paſtors, and Teachers given to the Church?*

A. Paul (as he told King *Agrippa*) was made a Miniſter and a Witneſs; he was a Witneſs of the powerful Operation of Grace in his own Soul, and ſo could tell others what it could do for them. —— In the State of Degeneration all Men are Strangers to Grace; they know not the LORD; and the Work of the Miniſtry is to open the Underſtandings of all ſuch, and to turn them to this heavenly Teacher; ſince nothing elſe can enable us to lead a ſober, righteous, Godly Life in this preſent World. —— And as ſome were ordained to Plant, ſo others were given to Water, that no young Plant might wither before it came to be rooted and grounded. —— We find that in Primitive Times, ſome declined from what they had attained to; for that they kept not with their Guide; and with ſuch *Paul* was forced to Travel in Birth again: For as Plants are not grounded as ſoon as they are planted, ſo Men are not eſtabliſhed in Righteouſneſs, as ſoon as they are turned from Unrighteouſneſs; and ſuch as were Strong, were to watch over the Weak, and lend them a helping Hand in their Travels, until they all came in the Unity of the Spirit to be perfect Men; and then there is no more Need of Man's Help; and we are all perfect Men, when a right Spirit comes to have the whole Government in us.

But who are fit to Plant and Water? No Ungodly Man, for ſuch have not the Spirit of JESUS; ſuch know not the Way of GOD's Salvation in themſelves, and ſo cannot direct others thereto, nor lend them a Hand therein; but ſuch as are, what *Paul* after his Converſion was, not only a Miniſter, but a Witneſs of what he Teſtified; or ſuch as have travelled in the Way of GOD's Salvation themſelves, and are come thro' the Teachings of Grace to that Strength and Perfection, *As to deny Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly and Godly in this preſent World.*

A TRYAL *of* CHRISTIANITY, *from the Life and Nature of* CHRIST, *and true* Chriſtians. *With a Deſcription of true Godlineſs, and the Way by which we may conform our Lives thereunto.*

PRofeſſors of Chriſtianity in our preſent Age conclude, that *Godlineſs conſiſteth in Hearing, Reading, Praying, Praiſing*, &c. Which are all good Exerciſes (if rightly performed) and may be called Chriſtian Duties, for that ALL *true Chriſtians* are required, and (by the good Spirit of GOD in their own Hearts) are often ſtirred up, to perform the two Latter. —— Howbeit, the Performance of theſe, and ſuch like Things *alone*, is no true Tryal of Godlineſs; Chriſtianity cannot be known thereby; for as there was a more excellent Righteouſneſs than what was found in the zealous *Phariſees*, ſo there is a more excellent Godlineſs than what appears in moſt profeſſed Chriſtians.

For Hearing, Reading, Praying, Praiſing, with other Exerciſes of that Nature may be imitated; the Ungodly as as well as the Godly, the Formaliſt as well as the Sincere may be found in the Practice of ſuch Things; but true Godlineſs cannot be imitated, being the natural Effects of the Rule and Government of a right Spirit, and may be truly called the Iſſues of Life; which none can bring forth but ſuch who are Chriſtians indeed. —— True Godlineſs is ſupernatural, and ſo above the Reach of *Adam*'s Off-ſpring, and whilſt they continue in the Fall are Servants to Sin. We muſt be reduced to a Godlike Nature before we can bring forth a Godly Converſation. Grapes cannot be expected from Thorns, nor Figs of Thiſtles; the Tree muſt be made good before the Fruit can be good; a righteous Life is the natural Effects of a right Spirit; our Lights cannot ſhine forth before Men, until we are enlighten'd with the Light of CHRIST;

CHRIST; without a true Converſion, there can be no true Converſation; for all Men in the Nature of fallen *Adam* being Ungodlike, and until we are raiſed by CHRIST the Second *Adam*, we cannot live Godlike. —— The Life and Nature of CHRIST, all true Chriſtians who have the Spirit of CHRIST, may find in themſelves; and others may have ſome Senſe thereof by reading, and well conſidering the Contents of the 5th, 6th and 7th Chapters of St. *Matthew*, where it is ſaid, *That* JESUS *ſeeing the Multitude, went up into a Mountain, and when he was ſate, his Diſciples came unto him, and he open'd his Mouth and taught them.* And what he taught his Diſciples then, he teacheth all true Chriſtians now; for tho' he aſcended, the holy Spirit that dwelt in him deſcended, and did then, doth now, and to the End of the World will Tabernacle with all the LORD's Redeemed, to be their Teacher; and as many as walk after this Spirit are taught of CHRIST, and walk in his Foot-ſteps: For as no Vine beareth one Kind of Grape, and the Branches another, ſo every Member of CHRIST anſwereth the Life of CHRIST in their Converſations; are naturally humble, lowly, meek, merciful, patient, peaceable, juſt, upright, honeſt and faithful. A Chriſtian is not known by his Words or his Devotion, but by his Works, his Nature, his Life, and his Converſation.

I ſhall not inſiſt on all Particulars contained in the foremention'd Chapters, but chiefly on the Five following Exhortations or Commands of our LORD; the leaſt of which for a true *Tryal of Chriſtianity*, is more to be obſerved than that Command, *Luke* xxii. 19. *This do in Remembrance of me.* For that the Proud as well as the Humble; the Cruel as well as the Merciful; the Fraudulent as well as the Juſt; the Ungodly as well as the Godly, can conform to the one, but cannot conform to the other. ——The true Tryal of Chriſtianity is, to be found in the Life and Nature of CHRIST: If the Spirit of CHRIST hath the Rule in us, theſe following Fruits will be brought forth by us.

1. In all our Communications, our *Yea* will be *Yea*; and our *Nay*, *Nay*; the Word that goeth out of our Lips will be ſure. ——He that is a Chriſtian indeed hath no Neceſſity in himſelf, nor need to be urged by others to bind his Soul with an *Oath*, to perform his Word; for the Law of the Spirit of Life in our own Hearts conſtrains us ſo to do.

Chriſtians in their Communications weigh their Words before they utter them, alſo their Capacities to perform them; knowing that a Promiſe cannot be broken without violating the righteous Law of GOD in their own Hearts; and whenever ſuch Violence is done, Terror enſues, and this makes good Men, who live under the Government of CHRIST, and dread much more to break their Words than others do to forfeit their Bonds; and this holy Dread makes our *Yea* to be *Yea*, and our *Nay* to be *Nay*: This makes us cautious in our Promiſes, and careful in our Performances. The Exhortation may be read in Scripture, but the binding Tie muſt be known in our own Hearts: All that have the Scripture have this Rule; but unleſs we have a Principle of pure Life in our ſelves, we cannot walk by this Rule; and we muſt not only have ſuch a Principle, but we muſt alſo improve it by a continued Practice before it really comes to be our Life, our Center, and our Nature; till then, we may ſay theſe Things we ſhould do, but cannot ſay theſe Things we do; and ſo witneſs againſt our ſelves, that tho' we have the Scriptures, we walk not according to the Scriptures; tho' we have the Words of CHRIST, we are not in the Life and Nature of CHRIST: Our *Yea* is not *Yea*; and our *Nay* is not *Nay*, in our Communication; our Words and our Promiſes are not ſteadfaſt and ſure. —— Swearing in the Communication of Chriſtians is ſuperfluous; for where Truth rules in the Heart, there cannot be Falſhood in the Lips; prove a profeſſed Chriſtian by this Rule, meaſure him by this Line, weigh him in this Ballance, if his *Yea* be *Yea*, and his *Nay* be *Nay*, in all his Communication: If he be a Man of his Word at all Times, if his Performances be one with his Promiſes, he abides in the Doctrine of CHRIST; and this is an evident Demonſtration that he is a Chriſtian indeed. But if theſe Performances are wanting, though we have a Chriſtian Name, we are not in the Chriſtian Nature; for as I ſaid before, what Manner of Grape the Vine beareth, the Branches thereof, if they continue in the Vine, beareth the ſame. —— The Second Exhortation or Command of our LORD was this, *Reſiſt not Evil*; and this was not only his Doctrine, but his Life and Nature, as we may plentifully read in Scripture; tho' he met with Revilings, Reproaches, Buffetings, and cruel Uſage, we do not find that he was once moved thereby, much leſs that ever he reſiſted, but

gave his Face to the Smiter, and his Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair; and when he was led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, *he was as a Lamb dumb before the Shearer, he open'd not his Mouth*; ſo much as to ſay, What have I done? or, Why is it thus?

Now the Fruits of the Spirit in Head and Members, Captain and Followers, CHRIST and Chriſtians are one in Nature; for as CHRIST was humble, lowly, meek, patient, peaceable under all his Sufferings, ſo are Chriſtians, if Chriſtians indeed; they render not Evil for Evil; they deſire not an Eye for an Eye, nor a Tooth for a Tooth; Revenge of any Kind is far from them; but as Patience and Forbearance was the Life and Nature of CHRIST, ſo it is the Life and Nature of all Chriſtians, as they grow in Grace, and come to the Fulneſs of the Stature of CHRIST. And by this alſo, Profeſſors of Chriſtianity may prove themſelves, whether they are Chriſtians indeed; it is the Deed that manifeſteth all Things; for bad Men may have good Words; Forms may be imitated; but the Patience, the Meekneſs, and Forbearance that dwelt in CHRIST cannot be imitated by them, but may be found in all true, ſincere Chriſtians. If any Vice hath got Head in us, make what Profeſſion we will, the Fruit of that Vice will be brought forth by us; we ſhall be proud, covetous, envious: If we are reviled we ſhall revile; if we are ſmitten we ſhall ſmite; if we are ſued at the Law cauſleſly we ſhall ſue: Whilſt it is ſo, we are in the World's Nature, their Spirit hath the Rule over us, and not the lowly, meek, Lamb-like Spirit of JESUS.

The Third Exhortation or Command of CHRIST was this, *Love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you.*

This alſo was not only the Doctrine, but the Life and Nature of CHRIST; and as it is his Life and Nature, ſo it is the Life and Nature of Chriſtians, who are thoroughly and effectually leavened with the Spirit of CHRIST.

No Man having the Spirit of JESUS, and living under the Government thereof, can hate the Perſon of any Man; for that by Creation we are all the Workmanſhip of GOD's Hands, and all true Chriſtians know that *Enmity, Hatred, Curſing, Spight* and *Perſecution*, proceedeth not from Men or Women as they are the LORD's Creation, but as they have

loſt

loſt his Image, and thereby become emptied of Good, and filled with all Evil; for as an evil Spirit comes to have the Rule over us, evil Fruits will be brought forth by us.

Could we but ſee our ſelves, did we but obſerve our own Natures, with the Fruits we bring forth in our Lives, we might eaſily judge of our ſelves and others, whether we were Converts or not, whether the Spirit of CHRIST, or the Spirit of this World had the Rule in us, and over us; for the Courſe of our Lives (eſpecially in Times of Tryal) declares who are led by the meek Spirit of JESUS, and who are not; who are leavened with the Leaven of Righteouſneſs, and who are not; who lead a ſober, upright, Godlike Life, and who do not; for it is not our Words, but our Converſation that manifeſts what Spirit hath the Rule in us, and over us.——For until by Converſion, our Natures come to be changed, we cannot love Enemies, having as much Enmity againſt them, as they have againſt us; we cannot bleſs them, we cannot pray for them, we ſhall be forward to do them Hurt, but far from doing them Good.

Come Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, lay aſide your Forms that you have long contended about; meaſure your ſelves by this Line, try your ſelves by this Touch-ſtone; are you reduced to ſuch a Frame of Spirit as to *love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you*? This is a true Character of Chriſtianity, this declares us to be Chriſtians indeed.——But if our Natures are averſe to theſe Things, let our Profeſſion be what it will, we bear not the Image of GOD, we are not Children of our heavenly FATHER; *For he maketh His Sun to riſe on the Evil, and on the Good, and ſendeth Rain on the Juſt and Unjuſt*; and were we but truly converted, were our Natures thoroughly changed, our Lives would be conformable, we ſhould be Godlike and Chriſtians indeed.——A fourth Branch of the Life, Nature and Doctrine of CHRIST was manifeſted in theſe Words, *Take no Thought what ye ſhall eat, what ye ſhall drink, nor yet for your Body, what ye ſhall put on; but ſeek ye firſt the Kingdom of* GOD, *and his Righteouſneſs.*

And what is this Kingdom that all true Chriſtians ſhould firſt ſeek? It cannot be any Thing above our Reach; it muſt be that Kingdom that JESUS compared to a loſt Piece of Silver; it muſt be an Acquaintance with that Spirit, and

the

the Government thereof, that from the Beginning the Great God placed in the Hearts of Men, to be our Inſtructor in Paths of Righteouſneſs; which Spirit alone for ſome time dwelt in the Firſt *Adam*, but was more abundantly manifeſted in Christ the Second *Adam*: and ſo called in Scripture the *Spirit of* Christ; for that it always dwelt in him, and was not only his Life, but the Life that he gives to all true Believers for their Ranſom from under the Power of Sin and Satan, and ſo neceſſary to be firſt ſought; for until a humble, lowly, meek, Lamb-like Spirit be raiſed in us, and come to have the Rule over us, we know not the Lord, nor cannot depend on his Providence; for the Rule and Government of this Spirit reduceth every Member to an excellent Qualification; and as many as are taught thereby, learns there from *in all Eſtates to be content.*

This was the Life and Nature of Christ, *tho' Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air Neſts, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head*; yet was he content, his thoughts run not out on Things pertaining to the Body; it was Meat and Drink unto him to do his Father's Will, and to finiſh the Work that he was ſent to do, a Work that none before him ever did, namely, the fulfilling of all Righteouſneſs, by doing the Thing that was right in the whole Courſe of his Life, as a Preſident to all his Followers.

And as many as have found the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and are come to live under the Rule and Government of a right Spirit, have the Mind of Christ; though they live in the World, their Thoughts run not out after the World; a true Chriſtian Converſation is to be diligent in our Callings, moderate in our Expence, and content with our Eſtates; whoſoever is reduced to a State of Temperance and Moderation, takes but little *Thought what they ſhall eat, or what they ſhall drink, or wherewithal they ſhall be cloathed*; they delight in Juſtice, Equity, Truth and Faithfulneſs, and their Thoughts are exerciſed therein, and reſting on God's Providence, their honeſt Endeavour is attended with a Bleſſing.

And here Profeſſors of Chriſtianity may alſo prove themſelves; this a true meaſuring Line, a Path that no Man can tread but ſuch as have the Spirit of Jesus. All Ungodly Men ſeek the World firſt; I may ſay firſt and laſt; the Riches of the World, the Honour of the World, the Pleaſures of the World, and the Praiſe of the World, *What they*

ſhall

ſhall eat, or what they ſhall drink to pleaſe their Appetites, *what they ſhall put on* to be accounted great in the World, and to have the Preheminence above and before their Fellow Creatures; their Thoughts run far more how they ſhall be conformable to the Faſhions of the World, than how they ſhall be conformable to the Life, Nature, and Doctrine of CHRIST; which is more Heathen-like than Chriſtian-like, and not effected by the moſt Part without much Diſhoneſty.

This is the natural State of the Sons and Daughters of Men, whilſt they continue in a State of Degeneration, Aliens to the Common-Wealth of *Iſrael*, and Strangers to that Covenant of Promiſe that the LORD made with the Houſe of *Jacob*; and to a better State none can come but by ſeeking and finding the Kingdom of GOD and his Righteouſneſs, or the Rule and Government of CHRIST by his eternal Spirit in our own Hearts; there the Seed is ſown, there the Leaven is laid, there the *Pearl of great Price* is found, but not without digging deep; for whilſt Vice is uppermoſt, Vertue is lowermoſt; whilſt Sin reigns, the Power of Grace is not felt; the bringing down of the one, is the Exaltation of the other. There muſt be a Death unto Sin, before there can be a New Birth unto Righteouſneſs; and there muſt be a New Birth unto Righteouſneſs, and a Growth unto Righteouſneſs, before we can center in that Content as to take no *Thought what we ſhall eat, what we ſhall drink, or wherewithal we ſhall be cloathed:* And ſo it is every Man's principal Concern, Firſt, to ſeek the Kingdom of GOD and his Righteouſneſs; Firſt, to know the Rule and Government of a right Spirit in our ſelves; for this qualifies us, and makes us capable of leading a Chriſtian Life, and of performing Chriſtian Duties both to GOD and Man.

The Fifth and laſt Branch of the Life, Nature and Doctrine of CHRIST, that I ſhall here inſiſt upon, is this; *All Things whatſoever ye would that Men ſhould do unto you, do ye even ſo unto them; for that is the Law and the Prophets*; or this is that the righteous LORD GOD required from his People in all Ages.

This doing is accounted by many zealous Profeſſors of Chriſtianity in our preſent Age, a Moral Righteouſneſs, and ſo but a ſmall Part, or rather no Part of true Godlineſs; but rightly conſidered, all actual Righteouſneſs (if it proceed from a right Spirit) is in it ſelf the true Righteouſneſs

neſs of Faith, and Maſter-Piece of all Godlineſs: But that Morality which is performed from a carnal Mind, in Imitation of good Mens Practices (merely for ſiniſter Purpoſes) but out of their Life and Nature, is of no worth; for if the Tree be known by its Fruits, Fruit manifeſteth the Nature of the Tree. If our God be, as certainly he is, righteous in all his Ways, and juſt in all Works, no People on the Face of the Earth are more God-like, none bear his Image more exact, than ſuch whoſe Converſations are upright, honeſt and juſt; and nothing can be more juſt than to do unto others in all Things, whatſoever we would that they ſhould do unto us.———This is the excellent Righteouſneſs, this exceeds not only the Righteouſneſs of *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, but the Righteouſneſs of moſt Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, for hereby we walk in Christ's Foot-ſteps, we fulfil both the Law and the Prophets.

Moſes, from an Admiration of the Juſtice and Equity that the Lord required from the Sons and Daughters of Men, under the Adminiſtration of the Law, uttered theſe Words, *What Nation is there ſo great, who hath Statutes and Judgments ſo Righteous, as all this Law that I ſet before you?* And doth the Law of the Spirit of Life require leſs Righteouſneſs from Chriſtians than that outward Law did from the *Jews?* I tell you nay, but rather more, for that more Power is given to all true Chriſtians to perform Acts of Righteouſneſs.

Were the Underſtandings of all who are called Chriſtians enlighten'd to ſee themſelves as they are, or had they but Hearts to prove themſelves by this Chriſtian Rule, meaſure themſelves by this ſtraight Line, weigh themſelves in this equal Ballance, the following ſorts of Men and Women, with many others, would be found like a bad running Coin in a Nation, they would no more paſs for true Chriſtians in God's Account, than Clipt and Counterfeit Money when it came to the Ballance did in Men's Accounts.

As *Firſt*, All ſuch who in Suits of Law, by perverting Juſtice, or other ſubtle Contrivances, poſſeſſeth themſelves of Houſes, Lands, or Goods, that they had no Right to:—*Secondly*, All ſuch who by violent Robbing, or private Stealing, taketh that which is not their own:——*Thirdly*, All ſuch who detain the Wages of the Hireling, or grind on the Neceſſities of the Poor, by beating down the Value of their Labours till they cannot live thereby:———*Fourthly*,

All ſuch who in Trade or Dealing uſeth light Weights, ſhort Meaſure, or any other kind of Deceivableneſs :—— *Fifthly*, All ſuch who caſt their Burthens on other Mens Shoulders, and go free themſelves :——— *Sixthly*, All ſuch as either give, or take Bribes, to effect Things that are not right :—— *Seventhly*, All ſuch who take Wages to ſerve LORD or Maſter, and are not faithful to their Truſt :—— *Eighthly*, All ſuch as make Contracts, and performs not the ſame; or engageth themſelves by Promiſes, and have no Regard to their Word :——— *Ninthly*, All ſuch who by evil Reports, Whiſperings, or Backbitings, ſoweth the Seeds of Strife, createth Prejudice, or quencheth Charity.

None of theſe abide in the Doctrine of CHRIST; none of theſe do as they would be done unto; though they bear a Chriſtian Name, they are Strangers to a Chriſtian Life; they live not under CHRIST's Government; they are not ſwayed by a Scepter of Righteouſneſs, and ſo are not Godlike.

Godlineſs and Chriſtianity bear but one Image; and if we would know the Nature of Godlineſs, let us conſider the Nature of Ungodlineſs. All ſober Men will grant that the Proud, the Covetuous, the Envious, the Fradulent, the Extortioner, the Swearer, the Lyer, *&c.* are Ungodly, and well they may; for where any ſuch Vice gets Head, little of the Image of GOD appears; and if ſuch Things makes Men Ungodlike, the contrary, which is Humility, Meekneſs, Moderation, Sobriety, Truth, Equity, and Faithfulneſs, muſt needs make us Godlike. ——— To become Ungodlike, is an eaſy Thing; for if our Backs are turned on GOD, we have nothing in our Eye but the World and Vanities thereof, promiſing us ſuch Contents, that little elſe is minded. ——— But the great Difficulty is to become Godlike again; though Thouſands are imployed therein, little Shew doth appear; for in the Eyes of degenerated Men, there is no Lovelineſs in that Path: And therefore the great Query is, by what Way may the Proud become humble? the Wild become ſober? the Fraudulent become juſt? the Intemperate become moderate? the Incontinent become chaſte? the Unfaithful become faithful? and ſo the Ungodlike become God-like?———I know many will ſay, by hearing good Miniſters; reading good Books, and conferring with good Men: But theſe Things have been tried, and that for ſeveral Years by many; yet no ſuch Change hath been

been wrought thereby. ——If Advice, Exhortation or Counſel would effect this great Work, we need not go any farther than the heavenly Sayings of CHRIST, in the aforeſaid Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Chapters of *Matthew*; for if we could hear all the Miniſters in the World, read all the good Books in the World, and confer with all the Men in the World, we could not have better Advice, Counſel and Exhortations than is contained in thoſe Three Chapters.

By hearing good Miniſters, reading good Books, and conferring with good Men, we may be convicted, but not thoroughly converted; we may come to talk Godlike, but not to live Godlike.—— For as Vertue hath a Spring, ſo Vice hath a Root, that Words will not reach. The Strength of Sin is the Growth of that Seed, that the wicked One hath ſown in the inwards Parts of the Sons and Daughters of Men; and foraſmuch as the Cauſe is within, it is impoſſible it ſhould be wholly removed by Things without; but as the Cauſe is within, ſo the Cure muſt be within, by mortifying the Body, of Sin, or bringing down the Strength thereof; which is thus effected:—There is no unrighteous Thing done, but there is an inward Motion before there is any outward Action; and by that Light which enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World (if our Eyes are inward) we may ſee thoſe Motions; and the Way to mortify the Body of Sin is, to deny and turn from every ſuch Motion in the Riſing thereof, and ſo to cruſh the Cockatrice in the Shell; for in their Riſing they are weak and powerleſs, and may eaſily be turned back.—— Had not *Jacob* ſupplanted *Eſau* in his Weakneſs, when a Meſs of Pottage was by him preferred before his Birth-right, *Eſau* had continued his Lord: And if we do not ſupplant Vice in the Riſing thereof, it will continue our Lord; but by every ſuch Denial, we bring down that which would ariſe and reign in us, and over us; whether it be Pride, Covetouſneſs, Envy, Falſhood, or any other Vice whatſoever; for the more Denials are given to Vice, the fewer Aſſaults it will make; the ſtronger the Oppoſition, the weaker the Attempt: As yielding gives Vice Ground to grow from a Seed to a Body, Denials brings it down from a Body to a Seed; ſo that though ſomething thereof may abide in us, it doth not reign over us, but is in Subjection to the Scepter of Righteouſneſs, or Rule of a right Spirit.——The Axe is never laid to the Root of the Tree,

till a Reformation begins within; the Life of Righteouſneſs ſtands in the Mortification of Sin, which is an inward Work. The Spirit of this World muſt be brought down before the Spirit of the LORD can be exalted in us: But as a right Spirit comes to reign, we have as many Motives to Acts of Righteouſneſs, as ever we had to Acts of Unrighteouſneſs; and as we give our ſelves in Obedience thereunto, Grace grows in us, and we grow in Grace: It is a Change in Government that changeth our Natures, and maketh us to become New Creatures; it is the Rule of a right Spirit that makes the Proud to become humble, the Wild to become ſober, the Covetous to become contented, the Cruel to become merciful, the Scandalous to become juſt, and the Ungodlike to become Godlike. —— By this we come to have the Bleſſing as well as the Birth-right; for the Bleſſing is not to the exalted Mind, but to the Poor in Spirit, to the Merciful, to the pure in Heart, who hunger and thirſt not after Riches and Honour, but after Righteouſneſs; and all that hunger and thirſt after it, will endeavour to ſatisfy their Souls with an Increaſe of it.——Now a Talent is not improved by its laying hid in a Napkin; if we would have more Grace, we muſt exerciſe the Meaſure we have attain'd unto; we muſt live in the continual Practice of right Things; we muſt keep in Lowlineſs, Meekneſs, Temperance, Patience, and other Vertues; we muſt be juſt in our Dealings, as well in the ſmalleſt Concern as ſuch as are more weighty; for a ſmall Matter turns the Ballance, and if that ſmall Matter be wanting, Things are not juſt, we do not even as we would be done by.——And this juſt Dealing (as Righteouſneſs comes to reign) will be no hard Thing; for as we accuſtom our ſelves thereunto it will be uppermoſt, it will be as a diligent Hand-maid, ready to offer her Service: And every Act of Righteouſneſs performed from the Motives of a right Spirit, hath its immediate Reward; which is not only an Anſwer of Peace, but Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.

The Way of Life is a Way of Pleaſantneſs, *all her Paths are Peace*; nothing makes it to ſeem difficult but the Averſeneſs of our Natures (when once corrupted) thereunto; but as our Natures come to be changed, we ſhall from a ſenſible Experience ſay with *David, Thy Commandements are exceeding broad.*

I cannot

I cannot recommend my ſelf, nor any other, after we are awakened unto Righteouſneſs, to any better Way for the Reforming of our Lives, then to turn in our Eye to the Gift of God in our ſelves, that by this Candle we may ſee the Riſings of Vice, and ſo to deny it; that the contrary, which is Grace and Truth, may riſe and reign in us; for that is our Help, that is our Strength, and that is our Defence; if ever we are Godlike, it is *that* that muſt make us ſo.

Words, whether retain'd in our Memories, or written in our Books, are but weak Inſtruments for this Work, becauſe the Old Man muſt be put off, which is an inward Work; and how is a ſorry Gueſt put off, or a Man that urgeth for that which we are not willing to grant, but by denying him, and turning from him?——Should we enter into Reaſoning with any Motions of Sin, 'tis much if we are not overcome thereby; for that it is the Nature of Sin not to turn back at a ſmall Denial; eſpecially, if it be a Sin that hath prevailed over us before; but in turning therefrom we give it the Repulſe; if it be not hearken'd unto it goes back.——And as the Old Man is put off, the New Man is put on; as Vice is denied, Vertue is embraced: And this New Man makes New Creatures; that which is created after God renews in us the Image of God; and bearing that Image in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, our Converſation will declare us to be Chriſtians indeed.——But if this Old Man with his Deeds of Darkneſs be not put off, the New Man that is created after God's Image in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, will not be put on; and though we have been awaken'd unto Righteouſneſs, we ſhall fall aſleep again, ſome in one Form, and ſome in another, feeding on Words without any Senſe of Power, or Life; and this Second Sleep appears to be a dead Sleep; for that though we may hear much ſpoken againſt Pride, Covetuouſneſs, Envy, *&c.* We are not as much as touched therewith, but live in the open Shew thereof.——Did the Sons and Daughters of Men, who are called Chriſtians, make it their Concern to be Chriſtians indeed, by mortifying in themſelves the Spirit of this World, which is the Original of all Vice, we ſhould be not only a happy, but a lovely People; for by mortifying the Body of Sin, Oppreſſion would ceaſe; all Wrongs and Injuries would determine and be at an End; Love would ſpring both to God and Man; Grace wold grow; Humility

Meekneſs,

Meekneſs, Moderation, and all other Vertues would ſhew themſelves; we ſhould be another Manner of People in our Converſations; our Words, and our Works would be juſt, upright, and honeſt; we ſhould confide in one another without any Scruple, or Doubt. What is more lovely than to be at all Times and on all Occaſions, juſt, upright, honeſt, and faithful, doing to all Men in all Things whatſoever, even as we would that they ſhould do unto us? A living under the Rule and Government of a right Spirit, qualifies us, and makes us capable of performing every Chriſtian Duty: We ſhall *love the* LORD *our* GOD *with all our Hearts, and our Neighbours as our ſelves*; which is the Sum of all Godlineſs, and true Character of Chriſtianity.

24 MA 59

FINIS